

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action of August 23, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Claims 1, 3-7, 10, 11, and 13-24 are pending. Claims 1, 10, 13, 14, and 18 have been amended. Dependent claims 21-24 have been added. Claims 2, 8, 9, and 12 have been canceled. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Examiner Interview

Applicant thanks Examiner Lao for the courtesies extended in the personal interview of December 22, 2005. During the Examiner Interview, it was agreed that independent claims 1, 10, 14, and 18 as presented herein would be allowable over the prior art of record.

Pending Claims

The previously pending claims have been rejected as allegedly being obvious in view of Smith in view of Hedman, alone or further in view of Sandage et al (Sandage). For the reasons described below, the claims are allowable.

One of ordinary skill in the art would not have found it to be obvious to combine Smith and Hedman. Smith discloses a mouse having a pair of conventional buttons, a pair of supplemental buttons and a scroll wheel. For children, the conventional buttons and the scroll wheel can be deactivated in their entirety to eliminate confusion (col 2, line 65- col. 3, line 9). Smith discloses mechanically locking the scroll wheel by a pin entering an opening in the scroll wheel or sliding between a pair of external ridges on the scroll wheel. The Office Action correctly identifies that this does not teach unidirectional locking. Smith is plainly intended to be used in either an adult mode (with only conventional buttons and scroll wheel) or in a child mode (with only the supplemental button).

Hedman similarly does not show or fairly teach the use of any rotatable wheel for scrolling. Hedman discloses a longitudinal slider which in one embodiment is biased to the end

of the travel slot. Hedman described that scrolling can be affected by sliding the slider and pressing either button 17 or button 19 to control the direction of sliding. Hedman fails to disclose or fairly teach any unidirectional locking or any objective reasons to modify Smith to arrive at the pending claims.

Even assuming for the sake of argument only that the combination of Smith and Hedman or Smith, Hedman and Sandage were proper, the claims would still be allowable because the proposed modifications to Smith would still not arrive at the pending claims. For example, independent claim 1 recites in part that the scroll wheel locking element is movable to a first position that prevents the rotation of the scroll wheel in the first direction and permits rotation of the scroll wheel in the second direction, and movable to a second position that prevents the rotation of the scroll wheel in the second direction and permits rotation of the scroll wheel in the first direction. The combination of Smith and Hedman clearly does not disclose any such structure. Figure 4 of Sandage illustrates two separately movable pins 40 and 42 controlled by a stationary solenoid 44 for engaging a sprocket. There is no disclosure of a scroll wheel locking element that meets the recitations of Independent claim 1.

Independent claim 10 recites in part that a light source and a light sensor are positioned on opposite sides of the lockable wheel that is spaced from the scroll wheel. One illustrative arrangement of this is shown in applicants' Figure 8. Such is clearly not disclosed or fairly taught by Smith, Hedman, or Sandage.

Independent claim 14 recites in part that the scroll wheel locking element is movable in a first direction and biased in a second direction which is angularly displaced from the first direction. One illustrative arrangement of this is shown in applicants' Figure 4. Such is clearly not disclosed or fairly taught by Smith, Hedman, or Sandage.

Independent claim 18 recites in part that scroll wheel locking lever moves along a path between first, second, and third distinct positions. One illustrative arrangement of this is shown in applicants' Figures 5-7. Such is clearly not disclosed or fairly taught by Smith, Hedman, or Sandage.

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As all independent claims are thus allowable over the prior art, all claims dependent therefrom are allowable for at least those reasons.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Any fees required for this Amendment are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,

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